



Homegrown Minneapolis

*Expanding the
Local Foods Movement*



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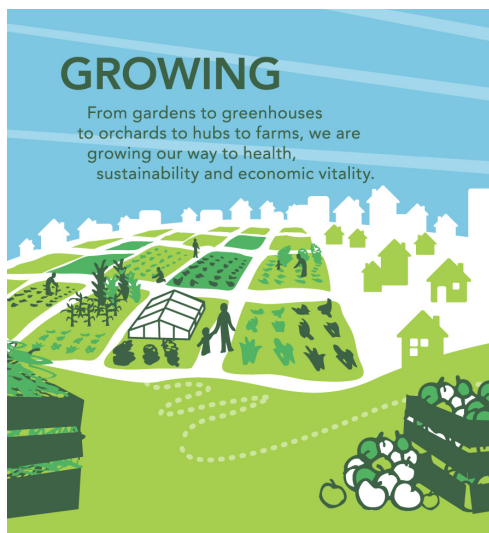


Minneapolis Department
of Health and Family Support

JULY 2012

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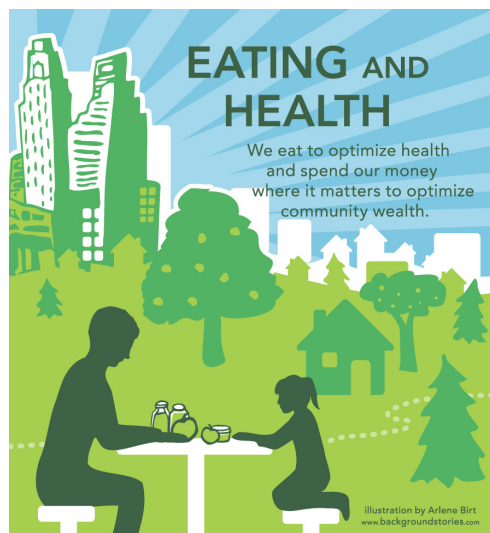
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Introduction

Homegrown Minneapolis (HGM) is a citywide initiative to expand the growing, processing, distribution, eating and composting of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods in the city and the surrounding region. Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak launched the initiative in late 2008 because of his strong interest in local foods and the goals of the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support to increase access to healthy foods. The mayor recognized that the City's policies and regulations can serve as facilitators—or barriers—to building a strong local food system and he envisioned HGM as a way to leverage and build on existing community efforts, foster dialogue and take action around a vision for a vibrant local food system that enhances the health of residents, the environment, and the local, regional and state economies.

The initiative, led by the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, has unfolded into three distinct phases:

Phase 1: Launch of Homegrown Minneapolis and development of recommendations for ways in which the City can support and advance the local food system

Phase 2: Implementation of recommendations

Phase 3: Formation of a food council

Since 2008, the City has received multiple inquiries from cities within Minnesota and beyond about HGM – its genesis, structure, processes, recommendations and accomplishments. HGM is somewhat unique because, unlike other communities, it did not begin with the formation of a food council. Instead, the food council resulted from years of an intensive city-community partnership that developed through the HGM process. The purpose of this document is to describe the activities and outcomes of each phase and to share the lessons learned. While the Minneapolis experience offers a replicable model for food systems efforts, this document is written more as a case study of the Minneapolis experience, rather than a “recipe” to follow. Nonetheless, it offers a structure and insights that may be helpful for other health departments or cities to consider as they start or continue food councils and other food system initiatives.

At-a-glance:

History of Homegrown Minneapolis

Phase I: November 2008 - June 2009

November-December 2008: Health department convenes HGM Steering Committee; recruits three chairpersons and subcommittee co-chairs; and hosts kick-off meeting that 60 stakeholders attend; and self-select into four subcommittees.

January-April 2009: Four subcommittees submit dozens of recommendations and related action steps.

May 2009: Steering committee seeks broader reach and input through a public comment period that includes community meetings and other activities. Health department incorporates HGM recommendations into grant writing processes and receives a state obesity prevention grant that funds the HGM coordinator and implementation of four recommendations.

June 2009: City Council receives HGM report outlining 57 recommendations and passes a HGM resolution authorizing an 18-month Implementation Task Force to pursue recommendations with a focus on eight high priority recommendations.



Phase II: July 2009-December 2011

July 2009: Implementation Task Force begins meeting and develops work groups to pursue priority recommendations.

March 2010: Health department receives federal Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant from the American Recovery Act to provide funding for the implementation of additional health-related recommendations.

August 2009-June 2011: Work groups fulfill 18 recommendations and make progress on 18 more, including plans for a food council; a HGM stakeholder meeting is held in December 2010 to report on progress and invite further community participation.

Summer 2011: Having accomplished its mission, the Implementation Task Force is dissolved in June; City Council passes resolution authorizing new food council in August; City staff continue efforts to accomplish implementation of additional recommendations.

October 2011: A City-Community Transition Team coordinates the food council nomination and appointment process; HGM stakeholder meeting is planned.

December 2011: City Council passes resolution appointing food council members; HGM stakeholder meeting is held to introduce new food council members to the community, celebrate Phase II accomplishments and set the stage for the next phase.

Phase III: January 2012 - Ongoing

January 2012: Food council convenes first meeting and begins to develop a work plan to strategically advance the vision of HGM.

March 2012: The HGM coordinator moves from the health department to the Minneapolis Sustainability Office.

March-May 2012: Food council develops bylaws and work plans; advocates for City Council passage of zoning and text amendments related to urban agriculture, and a composting ordinance.

Organizational Structure

Steering committee

100+ member stakeholder group

Four subcommittees:

- Farmers Market
- Community, school and home gardens
- Small business enterprise
- Commercial use of local foods

Phase I: Launching Homegrown Minneapolis

November 2008-June 2009

The goals of the first phase of the initiative were to convene stakeholders from across the community to identify food system challenges and needs; determine community and City staff expertise; and develop specific recommendations the City could pursue to create a healthier, sustainable local food system. This section describes the major activities in Phase I:

- Forming HGM's scope and structure.
- Convening stakeholders and generating draft recommendations.
- Gathering broader community input on draft recommendations.
- Passing a City Council resolution

Forming Homegrown Minneapolis initiative's scope and structure

In fall 2008, Mayor Rybak convened a meeting with staff from various City departments to propose a citywide, local foods initiative that would improve community health, enhance the City's sustainability and environmental efforts, and promote economic vitality. His interest in the local food system grew out of the passion that he and his wife shared for local foods and the urging of a food system activist. Because of food access initiatives underway at the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, he charged the health department with partnering with his office to lead the initiative. Mayor Rybak requested recommendations by June 2009 outlining steps the City could take to facilitate more growing, processing, distributing, eating and composting of local foods.

The health department convened a HGM Steering Committee to help design and implement the HGM initiative. A co-leadership model was developed in which the City shared coordination of HGM with community members who were already deeply engaged in local food system work. The health department staffed HGM with a public health prevention specialist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who had just started a two-year assignment at the department. Initially, the specialist operated as an assistant, but quickly transitioned into a full-time coordinator role.





The steering committee included 10 members from various City departments and seven community members who were already involved in Minneapolis' local food system. Once formed, the steering committee:

- Determined the scope of HGM and subcommittees.
- Identified and recruited community tri-chairs.

Determining the scope: Recognizing that a local food system included more components than a short-term initiative could tackle, the steering committee narrowed the initial scope of HGM to four components:

- Farmers markets
- Gardening
- Institutional use of local foods
- Small-scale business enterprise

While not encompassing all sectors of the food system, these components primarily reflected the interests and expertise of steering committee members and areas in which the City was already engaged.

Identifying and recruiting community tri-chairs: Though the health department had a history of working on specific projects related to food access, it did not have in-depth experience in food system work. Early on, steering committee members recognized that the initiative would benefit from ambassadors who were recognized and respected by community members and stakeholders in the local food system to be at the forefront of the initiative as tri-chairs.

Based on their knowledge and expertise, the health department recruited a tri-chair team including Julie Ristau, a food system advocate, and Megan O'Hara, a local foods advocate and wife of Mayor Rybak. Because Mayor Rybak and the health department staff wanted to ensure the HGM process would incorporate the health and economic needs of low-income communities, the steering committee also invited Stella Whitney-West, executive director of Northpoint Health and Wellness (a federally-qualified health care center), to serve as tri-chair. Northpoint serves diverse, low-income clients and patients in North Minneapolis, an area of the city hardest hit by economic and health disparities. Tri-chair roles included:

City departments involved in Phase 1:

- City Council
- Community Planning and Economic Development
- Health and Family Support
- Mayor's Office
- Regulatory Services
- Sustainability Office

- Connecting the health department to other people and organizations in the local foods movement, and recruiting participants from various sectors and low-income communities.
- Providing guidance based on their knowledge of food system efforts underway across the country.
- Helping to conceptualize and guide the direction of the initiative as it developed.
- Lending credibility to the initiative through their knowledge, expertise, and reputations.
- Ensuring that HGM remained accountable to its intent and direction.

The tri-chairs served as unpaid volunteers who dedicated many hours participating in the steering committee planning processes; making connections with potential stakeholders; and attending subcommittee meetings.

Convening stakeholders

Convening stakeholders: The steering committee launched HGM at a December 2008 gathering where more than 100 attendees learned about the purpose and scope of HGM. Attendees included City staff, schools, parks, local businesses, neighborhood organizations, non-profits, community residents, farmers markets, restaurateurs, business owners, and community-based agencies. They became the HGM Stakeholder Group and self selected into one of four subcommittees:

1. **Farmers Markets Subcommittee:** developed recommendations related to providing coordinated services to the existing markets; using farmers markets as a foundation for providing food to underserved populations; and facilitating linkages between existing farmers markets, farmers and consumers.
2. **Community, School, and Home Gardens Subcommittee:** developed recommendations related to increasing the number of community, school and home gardens throughout Minneapolis; linking City resources and programs to community gardeners; and simplifying the process by which gardens are developed and managed.
3. **Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture Subcommittee:** developed recommendations related to creating training and employment opportunities for youth, low-income families and others through food



production; and using City resources to encourage small food-related business ventures.

4. Commercial Use of Local Foods Subcommittee: developed recommendations related to increasing the use of local, fresh foods in commercial institutions and connecting regional growers to opportunities within the City.

Consistent with HGM's shared-leadership structure, the subcommittees were co-chaired by a City of Minneapolis representative and a community stakeholder. For example, the Community, School, and Home Gardens Subcommittee was chaired by a staff person of the City's Sustainability Office and the executive director of a local non-profit that promotes and supports community gardens. Participation in subcommittees ranged from 15 to 60 members. Though not everyone came to subcommittee meetings, many spent dozens of hours contributing their experience, expertise and suggestions. The subcommittees met regularly from January to April 2009 to identify issues specific to their topics and develop recommendations for addressing them.

Generating draft recommendations

Between January and April 2009, the steering committee met a few times to plan the next steps and troubleshoot issues or problems that arose from the subcommittees. For example, some members of the Farmers Market Subcommittee contacted a tri-chair to express their frustration over the narrow scope of the recommendations that the group was generating. In response, a tri-chair came to a subcommittee meeting to help participants expand their scope.

To ensure standardization among recommendations generated by each group, the steering committee developed a template that asked subcommittees to state the rationale for its recommendations;

identify key City and community partners needed to carry out the recommendations; and an estimated timeline. Recognizing that some subcommittees were creating recommendations involving a broad array of players (e.g., philanthropic community, schools, federal policymakers), the steering committee asked subcommittees to focus primarily on recommendations that the City had a lead or key role in achieving.

A tremendous effort by each subcommittee resulted in 72 recommendations, many with detailed action steps. Members of the steering committee refined the list to 57 recommendations by combining overlapping recommendations.

Gathering community input

The City of Minneapolis conducts public comment periods for all plans presented to the City Council for adoption. Comment periods entail postings in the newspaper; online opportunities for reviewing and commenting on draft plans; and community meetings. Though the HGM recommendations were not a typical plan, the steering committee chose to replicate and expand the public comment period to foster transparency and to gather input from community members and stakeholders who were not involved in generating the recommendations. The HGM Steering Committee used a variety of strategies to solicit comments on the draft recommendations:

Online Feedback: City staff posted the draft recommendations on the HGM website and sent emails to the HGM and other listservs inviting stakeholders and others to review the draft recommendations and submit their feedback during the month of May 2009. Approximately 45 comments were received through the online feedback process.

Public Meetings: Through listservs, community meetings, the HGM website and community

Priority Recommendations for the Implementation Task Force

- Form a City advisory committee on food policy.
- Draft a community garden program policy that allows organizations to lease city-owned land not suitable for development.
- Determine local food system priorities for the City's State legislative agenda.
- Develop an indicator to track progress on increasing sustainable, locally grown foods.
- Create a citywide topical plan on community gardens and urban agriculture.
- Inventory community kitchens, processing and distribution of sustainable, locally grown food.
- Improve coordination of farmers markets.
- Improve access to healthy foods, including the use of EBT at farmers markets.

newspapers, the City invited Minneapolis residents to attend two HGM public meetings in order to learn about the initiative; talk about their barriers to accessing healthy food; review the draft recommendations; and offer feedback. The meetings were held in the evenings at Minneapolis park buildings in neighborhoods experiencing the greatest health disparities to engage residents who were under-represented in the Homegrown Stakeholder Group and subcommittees (i.e., communities of color, immigrants, refugees and low-income residents). Approximately 40 to 45 individuals attended each meeting.

Stakeholder Meeting: More than 110 stakeholders who had been involved

in the HGM initiative since December 2008 were invited to a Stakeholder Group meeting on May 12, 2009, to examine the draft recommendations and offer any final suggestions or comments; approximately 50 people attended.

Presentations to City Advisory Groups: City staff and HGM co-chairs presented an overview of the HGM initiative and draft recommendations to various City advisory groups and other community partners including the Environmental Coordinating Team, Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee, and Public Health Advisory Committee.

Presentations at Community Meetings and Events: The HGM Coordinator conducted presentations or staffed tables at community events geared toward specific cultural groups (e.g., Indigenous Peoples Resource Fair, Northside Housing Fair, Hispanic Health Network, Hawthorne Huddle, and Korean Center). Along with generating some feedback, these events often resulted in people being added to the HGM listserv to receive updates about the initiative. In each of these community-engagement activities, HGM



representatives asked the public to review the draft recommendations and offer feedback based on the following questions:

- What do you like about the draft recommendations?
- What ideas are missing from the draft recommendations?
- What issues should be considered in the implementation of the recommendations once they are finalized?
- What other questions, comments, or concerns do you have related to this initiative or the local food system in general?

In addition to the feedback gathered through community meetings and the website, the City received comments through formal letters submitted by neighborhood associations and other external entities including Eureka Recycling, Minnesota Food and Justice Alliance, and students from the University of Minnesota's Environment and Agriculture program.

Passing a City Council resolution

Early on, the steering committee determined that the primary Phase I deliverables would be a report to the City Council and a resolution stating the council's general support for a vibrant local food system and the HGM recommendations. After Council Member Cam Gordon authored the resolution, health department staff and HGM tri-chairs made personal visits with each council member to update them on the Phase I progress and seek their support on the resolution. These visits yielded six additional co-authors from the 13-member council.

Through the resolution, which passed unanimously, the City Council acknowledged the importance of local foods to the economy, environment and health of Minneapolis residents. The resolution also authorized a short-term, 16-member Implementation Task Force comprised of City staff and community members to pursue the recommendations. Council authorization for the task force provided City staff with direction and institutional "permission" to take on food system projects as part of their work plans and incorporate food-related activities into grant writing processes.

The resolution directed the task force to pursue eight priority recommendations and report back to the Minneapolis City Council at nine- and 18-month intervals. The eight recommendations were prioritized for two reasons:

- The health department had to fulfill its grant-funded obligations including Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) systems at farmers markets, community-based food preservation support, and the development of an urban agriculture policy plan.
- The fulfillment of some recommendations was required before other recommendations could be implemented. For example, the City had to create and adopt an urban agriculture policy plan before it could act on specific recommendations related to zoning.



In seven months, the City of Minneapolis convened the city's local food leaders; developed a clear and achievable goal and created a structure and process for developing the recommendations and vetting them with Minneapolis residents and the City Council.

The primary lessons from Phase I include:

HGM galvanized existing energy around local foods and created even more momentum

The HGM initiative did not initiate the local foods movement in Minneapolis. Instead, it provided a forum for people who were already deeply engaged in food system efforts (e.g., farmers market managers, food justice advocates, chefs and others) to contribute to the development and implementation of a shared, government-community vision. The process of coming together increased momentum for stakeholders' existing efforts and generated new strategies and funding for improving the food system. At the same time, the HGM process created some unfulfilled expectations for solutions that were beyond the scope of Phase

In retrospect

I to address. For example, a number of regional farmers initially attended the Farmers Market Subcommittee because the increasing number of farmers markets was diluting their customer base at longstanding markets. When it became clear that their needs were beyond the scope of HGM, some stopped attending subcommittee meetings.

The shared leadership structure provided many benefits

As described earlier, the Phase I HGM Steering Committee and each of the four subcommittees were co-led by a City staff person and a community representative – typically someone from a community-based, non-profit agency who was involved in food system activities. This shared leadership structure resulted in a wide range of experiences and perspectives and yielded recommendations that were grounded in both the experiences of community members and the realities of City functions, authority and budgets. In addition, the recommendations generated by the subcommittees were more realistic because they were created in a context in which existing city ordinances, zoning codes, and processes for changing them were understood and incorporated. The shared leadership model also provided the recommendations with legitimacy. Because the recommendations reflected City and community perspectives, HGM avoided community claims that “City bureaucrats are out of touch” or City claims that “community demands are unrealistic.” Finally, the model of shared leadership and learning established buy-in among the City and community partners that would ultimately be needed to implement HGM recommendations.

Short timelines and required deliverables yielded tangible results

The local food system and strategies for improving it are profoundly complex. The steering committee's ability to avoid a prolonged "examination of the problem" stemmed from three factors:

The specific goal of reporting recommendations to the mayor and City Council within seven months compelled the steering committee to develop a well-defined work plan that ensured the HGM process moved forward.

Concentrating on four areas (i.e., those pursued by the four subcommittees) limited the "scope of inquiry" and prevented the process from becoming bigger and more complex than committee members' expertise and the tight timeline could accommodate.

The steering committee requested recommendations specific to actions that the City could take directly (e.g., pass an ordinance) or heavily influence.

Support from elected officials spurred action and support

Mayor Rybak's leadership and involvement in HGM elevated the initiative into a high-profile endeavor that attracted the involvement of many stakeholders within Minneapolis' food movement and staff from various City departments. The involvement and support of Councilmember Gordon and his aide were tremendously helpful in navigating City governance procedures and positioning Phase I as the foundation for action.

Dedicated staff time to HGM was essential

Though HGM's tri-chairs and HGM Steering Committee members developed and guided the process of Phase I, most could not coordinate

the day-to-day operations that were necessary to fulfill the deliverables on the mayor's short timeline. Fortunately, the health department had a newly hired prevention specialist from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who assumed the role of HGM coordinator. Her responsibilities included coordinating communication between tri-chairs and City staff; handling logistics associated with the steering committee, stakeholder meetings and community events; leading the process of collecting, distilling and categorizing the initial set of recommendations; writing and publishing the report, and more. Additionally, City staff who served as subcommittee co-chairs carried out extensive behind-the-scenes administrative work associated with their subcommittee, including recruiting additional participants; communicating with subcommittee members; scheduling meetings; assuring completion of agendas, research and documents; completing meeting minutes; and gathering and galvanizing subcommittee participants' approval of language used in draft recommendations.

Engaging residents from low-income, non-English speaking, and diverse communities was challenging. Despite intentional efforts to include representation from diverse communities in the recommendation-generating process, Phase I had limited success in directly engaging low-income and immigrant residents. Though some organizations that serve or represent these communities were involved, it was unclear how much outreach they conducted to engage their constituencies.

Organizational Structure

Two Homegrown chairpersons

16-member Implementation Task Force

Seven work groups responsible for implementing specific recommendations

Phase II: Implementing Homegrown Minneapolis Recommendations

July 2009-December 2011

The primary goals of the second phase of HGM were to implement as many of the 57 recommendations developed as possible and establish a plan for continuing the work once the Implementation Task Force expired in June 2011. The main activities of Phase II included:

- Convening the Implementation Task Force to guide HGM efforts and communications, and implement recommendations.
- Defining a structure to expand and pursue HGM goals beyond June 2011.
- Passing a City Council resolution authorizing the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council.
- Engaging HGM stakeholders and community members in the implementation and ongoing dialogue about the local food system.

Convening the Implementation Task Force to implement recommendations

The 16-member task force consisted of representatives from City departments, the City Council, and community and organizational partners. A council member and mayoral policy aide chaired the committee along with a community representative. From City departments, the task force included members from Health and Family Support, Regulatory Services, Community Planning and Economic Development, Public Works, the Mayor's Office and City Coordinator's Office of Sustainability.

The HGM coordinator and task force co-chairs assigned some recommendations directly to specific City departments to implement as part of their ongoing operations. For example, Community Planning and Economic Development developed a Homegrown Business Development Center to provide low-interest loans to startup food-related businesses. Health department interns developed an inventory of community kitchens and Public Works developed a policy on water usage for community gardens. Regulatory Services partnered with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture in a federal grant and



used the opportunity to improve the food regulatory environment.

Other recommendations were assigned to work groups, which were coordinated by a City staff person, City Council member, and community member. This tri-leadership model facilitated seamlessness, speed, and success generating solutions and, when necessary, moving policy changes through the City Council.

Formal Phase II work groups included:

- **Regulatory Review/Business Models Work Group:** focused on identifying, clarifying and revising problematic regulations related to the operation, and startup of food-related businesses (e.g., urban farms, restaurants serving local food, farmers markets). Some of its activities included reviewing existing regulations and seeking feedback from community members interested in starting such businesses.
- **Community Garden Program Work Group:** focused on recommendations related to community gardens such as the need for clarifying and streamlining the process for establishing gardens on City-owned property; worked with other public entities to identify land available for gardening; and developed resources and services that encourage residents to garden.
- **Long-Term Food Policy Advisory Entity and Community Engagement Work Group:** focused on developing a long-term food policy advisory entity to guide the City's local foods efforts past June 2011 and made recommendations for the structure and roles of a new food council for Phase III. In addition, members of this group met with stakeholders to engage low-income and diverse residents in HGM.
- **Local Food Sustainability Indicator Work Group:** focused on developing targets for the City's new Local Food Sustainability Indicator to help measure progress and provide a mechanism for accountability on local food-related goals.
- **Food Access Work Group:** focused on recommendations relating to food access issues including advising on the development, implementation and promotion of EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) in farmers markets, especially in underserved neighborhoods; food distribution pilot projects; and a community food preservation infrastructure.
- **Farmers Market Work Group:** focused on recommendations to strengthen the farmers market system in Minneapolis.
- **Urban Agriculture Policy Plan Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committees:** focused on creating a city-wide policy plan focused on urban agriculture, including land use and development issues.

Work groups met approximately every three to six weeks to pursue recommendations assigned to them. Work group representatives regularly updated the entire task force on their progress and sought input when necessary. For example, the sustainability indicator targets were brought before the task force at least four times during 2010 and 2011 for discussion. Some working groups met for the entire 18-month implementation period while others disbanded once work was completed, often with people shifting their time and attention to a new topic that resulted in a new working group. Two working groups—Food Access and Municipal Farmers Market—disbanded early on once it became clear that City departments already had mechanisms for engaging partners in implementing their respective recommendations.

Reports and Resources Related to Specific Homegrown Recommendations

[Expanding Electronic Benefit Transfer at Farmers Markets in Minneapolis: Lessons Learned from the 2010 Season](#)

[Urban Agriculture Policy Plan](#)
[Local Food Sustainability Indicator](#)

[Local Foods Resource Network Hubs Project Summary](#)

[Community Kitchens Inventory](#)

[Guide to Starting a Local Food Business in Minneapolis](#)

The task force met monthly and operated in an advisory role by discussing issues that work groups brought forward. The task force also recommended policy action for the City Council and served as a space for exploring and guiding new ideas forward.

Progress on HGM Recommendations: During the 18 months the Implementation Task Force was authorized to exist, City staff and external partners made tremendous progress on the HGM recommendations, implementing more than the priority eight recommendations outlined in the 2009 City Council resolution. By the end of 2011, 14 recommendations had been completed; 18 were still “in progress” and 12 had not been addressed because they needed funding, were deemed a lower priority, or lacked sufficient clarity to advance. A Progress Report on Homegrown Minneapolis Recommendations describes the status of the progress on each recommendation, as of December 2011.

With obesity prevention grant funds, the health department implemented six of the 57 recommendations directly or through contracts with other City departments and community-based organizations. In partnership with the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, the health department helped four farmers markets (two in 2010; two more in 2011) develop systems and processes that enabled recipients of food support to purchase fresh produce through EBT.

The health department also funded and guided the development of the Local Foods Resource Hubs Network; conducted community kitchen and food business start-up inventories; and piloted a Food Preservation Network to build community capacity to preserve locally grown foods. Furthermore, the health department provided funding to the City’s Community Planning and Economic Development Department, which conducted an 18-month process resulting in the development and implementation of the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan that permanently updated the City’s zoning codes to ease the way for urban agriculture in Minneapolis. Lastly, the health department used state and federal grant funds to continue to support the salary of the full-time HGM coordinator.



Expanding and pursuing Homegrown Minneapolis goals beyond June 2011

As described earlier, the Implementation Task Force created a Long-Term Food Policy Advisory Entity work group to fulfill a Phase I recommendation calling for a long-term structure for HGM. It stated:

“Explore the need for, and structure of, a longer-term advisory entity that will provide ongoing guidance to the City on local foods issues and is representative of Minneapolis’ diversity. If appropriate, establish such an entity.”

The work group was co-chaired by the HGM coordinator, one of the three original community tri-chairs, and one of the task force co-chairs. The work group explored the following questions:

- Is a separate local foods entity necessary or could its functions be fulfilled by an existing entity?
- If a new entity is necessary, should its purpose be purely advisory or advisory and action oriented?
- What is the appropriate “home” for the entity (within city government vs. at a community-based organization)?
- How should the entity be structured and what are its scope and roles?

To answer the first question, the work group met with the leadership from two existing City committees (Public Health Advisory Committee and Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee) to explore the feasibility and implications of fulfilling this recommendation through these existing committees. Because of the broad scope that each of these committees already encompassed, the work group determined that housing food system work under these entities would not provide sufficient emphasis and structure to achieve HGM goals. As a result, the work group advised that a separate entity be established. To answer questions about the form and appropriate

home for the new entity, work group members researched food policy councils in other cities and recruited University of Minnesota undergraduates to review the experiences of other cities and make recommendations to the work group and Implementation Task Force. Based on their findings and the existing leadership infrastructure already provided by the City of Minneapolis, the task force decided to house the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council within City government though maintaining its shared leadership model and emphasis on serving community and City interests.

To define the scope and roles of the food council, work group members conducted 30 stakeholder interviews to:

- Explore the implications of defining the Council’s geographic scope as citywide, regional or statewide.
- Make stakeholders aware of HGM and the upcoming food council.
- Hear from people who were not involved in developing or implementing the initial set of HGM recommendations.
- Update existing recommendations and identify new ones to make sure that the priorities of HGM remained relevant and were addressing essential issues in the local food system.

After the stakeholder interviews, the task force hosted two community meetings for HGM stakeholders and others to provide input on the food council. Based on feedback from the meetings, the task force further refined the purposes of the food council as:

- Develop innovative policies and strategies to improve the growing, processing, promoting, distributing, eating and composting of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods in Minneapolis.
- Advise the mayor, City Council, and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on food system-related opportunities and challenges.

Personnel Costs to support HGM

- One full time HGM Coordinator: \$101,000 salary and benefits
- 20% FTE of supervisor of HGM Coordinator: \$24,000 salary and benefits
- 50% FTE for HGM intern: \$17,600

- Provide technical expertise and recommendations in the development of the City's Local Food Sustainability Indicator targets.
- Advance the food system in directions that are health promoting, environmentally sustainable, local, resilient, inclusive, equitable, fair and transparent and, where necessary, convene additional expertise to innovate around challenges.
- Assist in the development, implementation and evaluation of HGM recommendations.
- Support, participate and provide leadership in the development of regional food system work.
- Assist with opportunities to celebrate food and its role in strengthening the connections of Minneapolis' many communities and cultures.

Passing a City Council resolution authorizing the new structure

To form the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council as a formal structure within City government, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution authorizing it as a 21-member body comprised of 15 community members with diverse expertise and perspectives, and six representatives from the following City departments: Health and Family Support (health department), Community Planning and Economic Development, City Coordinator–Sustainability, Mayor's Office, Regulatory Services and a council member or council member representative.

Continuing to engage HGM stakeholders and community members

To keep the broader 300+ stakeholder group engaged and informed in HGM activities and progress during Phase II, the health department continued adding interested people to its email distribution list; updated the website; and created two brief summary communications documents for stakeholders (one in December of 2010 and 2011). Additionally, HGM convened three community meetings where Implementation Task Force members presented information about HGM's progress and sought feedback on future directions. More than a hundred people attended the most recent community meeting in December of 2011.



In retrospect

Similar to Phase I, City staff, in partnership with community representatives, made tremendous progress on implementing HGM recommendations and fulfilling its purpose of increasing the production, distribution, processing, eating and composting of healthy, sustainably and locally grown foods. Building on decades of community efforts and leveraging its ability to effectively convene stakeholders around systems-change efforts, the City formally wove food system work into its goals, strategic directions and sustainability efforts.

The primary lessons from Phase II include:

Phase I City Council resolution and its requirements set the stage for political support

For most City Council members, the 2009 resolution was their first introduction to HGM and its goals. As a result, several council members emerged as HGM leaders, at times co-leading or participating in working groups. The resolution's requirement that the Implementation Task Force report back to the City Council at nine-month and 18-month intervals provided strategic mechanisms for continuing to raise council members' awareness and support of HGM and its various recommendations. This support proved helpful when the task force asked the City Council to take action on specific HGM-related measures such as the adoption of the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan.

The limited timeframe and specific deliverables continued to facilitate action

Because the City Council resolution mandated specific actions (implement eight recommendations and report back at nine- and 18-months), the task force had to act quickly to convene the information and people necessary to implement specific recommendations. The work group structure provided a mechanism for efficiently exploring and acting upon recommendations.

The Phase II structure created an enterprise-wide effort to improve Minneapolis' food system

The 2009 City Council resolution authorized certain City departments to serve on the task force, which then

assigned them specific recommendations to implement. Each department—either individually or as part of a work group—was accountable to the task force and the City Council for specific actions. Their progress contributed to overall improvements in the City's support for local food system efforts.

Many Phase II accomplishments are attributed to obesity prevention funds

As described earlier, the health department supported implementation of six HGM recommendations through its state and federal obesity prevention grants. These grants also funded the HGM coordinator position, which was essential for managing the overall initiative. The health department garnered over a million dollars of funding since 2008 to support the work of HGM. While fortunate that the health department secured funds for food system improvements, the overall initiative needs a broader base of funding that can be applied to the non health-related aspects of HGM. A broader funding base would also provide greater security as a reliance on a single funding source is risky. In fact, some of the health department grants have ended, resulting in an inability to continue funding a full-time HGM coordinator.

Phase II accomplishments set the stage for addressing broader food system issues

During Phase II, the Implementation Task Force focused on implementing recommendations related to a few (of the many) components of the food system. As task force members delved into their respective areas, they gained a better understanding of the overall food system and the various levers that have to be pulled to improve it. They began to recognize that Phase II progress was significant; however, they needed to expand their “scope of inquiry” to address all five areas of the food system: growing, distributing, processing, eating and composting. They also recognized the importance of broadening their focus beyond Minneapolis to influence regional, state and national factors that affect a local food system.

Organizational Structure

21-member Minneapolis Food Council

5 community members

6 representatives from City departments

1 City Council member

Phase III: Forming the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council

January - Ongoing

Phase III officially began in January 2012 after the short-term Implementation Task Force disbanded (as directed by the 2009 HGM resolution) and HGM transitioned to the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council. The main activities of Phase III have been:

- Establishing a food council.
- Coordinating the food council's efforts, and developing its bylaws and work plans.

Forming the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council

After the Minneapolis City Council passed the resolution authorizing a 21-member food council in summer 2011, the HGM coordinator initiated an application process for the 15 seats available to Minneapolis stakeholders. Following the same appointment process used for other formal City boards, this process included:

- Developing an application.
- Issuing a 30-day public notice.
- Selecting appointees through a nominations committee.
- Approving appointees through the City Council.

The HGM coordinator recruited applicants through the HGM listserv, formal and informal notices to other networks, and word-of-mouth. The City received 98 applications for non-City department seats. The nine-person nominations committee selected members and presented them to the Mayor's Office and City Council, which approved all 21 members in December 2011. From the City of Minneapolis, the members represent six departments (Health and Family Support, Community Planning and Economic Development, Mayor's Office, Regulatory Services, City Coordinator's Office and the City Council). From the community, members represent the grocery industry, health care, academia, hunger relief organizations, farmers, environmentalists, and more.

The City announced the members at a mid-December 2011 HGM community meeting where more than 100 people gathered to recap progress to-date and generate ideas and recommendations for the food council to consider.





Coordinating the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council and developing a strategic plan

As of 2012, the HGM coordinator position moved from the health department to the City Coordinator's Office, which coordinates initiatives across City departments. With the obesity prevention grants that funded the HGM coordinator having ended, the health department has limited grant funding to continue some HGM related projects like EBT in farmers markets. The City currently cannot support a full-time Homegrown coordinator, but with contributions from the health department and Community Planning and Economic Development, the City has hired a part-time consultant on a temporary basis whose primary roles are to coordinate the food council and seek funding to sustain the council and to implement its work plans.

As of May 2012, the food council met monthly (four times). Its major activities included developing bylaws and work plans that strategically address all five major components of the food system; incorporating recommendations from Phase I that

were not addressed; and developing new goals, strategic directions and tactics that address other components of the food system. The work plans will represent goals related to each of the five components of the food system:

- Growing
- Processing
- Distributing
- Eating and health
- Composting

In addition to planning, the food council has already taken action on specific policy items such as a composting ordinance and the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan text amendments (updating the City's zoning codes) that went before the City Council in March 2012. Going forward, the council will advocate for provisions in the federal Farm Bill that will promote and support a local food system and ensure a robust hunger safety net for Minneapolis children, families, and senior citizens.

Going forward

In the last four years, HGM has grown into a city-wide initiative to improve the local food system. In fact, because of the enterprise-wide nature of the HGM, the HGM coordinator position moved from the health department to the City Coordinator's Office, which coordinates initiatives across City departments. Most of the obesity prevention grants that funded the position expired; however, with contributions from the health department and Community Planning and Economic Development, the City has hired a part-time, temporary consultant to coordinate the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council and seek ongoing funding to sustain the food council and to implement its work plans.

Going forward, the food council will move beyond the limited scope of inquiry defined in 2008, using the five components of the food system as the foundation for its work plans. This expansion reflects the increased sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of the food system among the people involved in HGM and the experience and expertise they have developed to address a wider spectrum of food system issues. In addition, the food council will continue to foster political support from the mayor and City Council members, and seek funding necessary to sustain HGM's momentum and accomplishments.

Because much of HGM's past success can be attributed to the political support from the mayor and City Council and health-related funding, the food council and HGM coordinator will continue to foster political support and funding for HGM's activities and funding to continue the momentum built since 2008, and to affect positive change in the food system in the years to come.

The City-community partnerships formed through this initiative have been both meaningful and effective at making significant, lasting improvements toward creating a healthier, sustainable, local food system in Minneapolis. The tangible progress and relationships that continue to emerge from the HGM initiative provide reassurance that communities can leverage the best of their public and private institutions and their citizenry to create food systems that promote health, sustainability and economic vitality effectively and efficiently over generations.



Resources

A number of documents were referenced and hyperlinked in the text of this report. They can be found on the Homegrown Minneapolis website at www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/homegrown/index.htm

1. Homegrown Minneapolis: Final Report presented to the Health, Energy and Environment Committee of the Minneapolis City Council, June 15, 2009.
2. Two Year Report on the Homegrown Minneapolis Initiative, December 2010.
3. Progress Report on Homegrown Recommendations, January 2012.
4. Phase II Report: Homegrown Minneapolis Initiative, Collaborating for a More Healthy, Sustainable, Local Food System, December 2011.
5. Urban Agriculture Policy Plan, April 2011.
6. Community Kitchens Inventory, July 2011.

Other documents related to Homegrown Minneapolis recommendations can be found on the City of Minneapolis website at www.minneapolismn.gov

7. Expanding Electronic Benefit Transfer at Farmers Markets in Minneapolis: Lessons Learned from the 2010 Season, March 2011.
8. Guide to Starting a Local Food Business in Minneapolis, 2011.
9. Local Foods Resource Network Hubs Project Summary, April 2012.



Appendices

Appendix 1

Minneapolis City Council Resolution 2009R-283: Recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods and Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force.

Appendix 2

Minneapolis City Council Resolution 2011R-633: Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council and Recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods.

APPENDIX 1

RESOLUTION 2009R-283

By Gordon, Glidden, Hodges, Hofstede, Remington, Samuels, Schiff Recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods and Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force.

Whereas, cities across the US are increasingly focusing on providing healthy, sustainably and locally grown food supplies for their residents by developing local food policies that encourage community gardens and other forms of urban agriculture within city limits, as well as better relationships with small farmers in their region; and

Whereas, populations whose diets are high in fruits and vegetables experience better health, with lower rates of obesity and related chronic conditions; and

Whereas, access to affordable, healthy foods currently varies depending on race, class and geography; and

Whereas, the ability to grow, sell, and easily obtain a consistent, adequate supply of fresh, local foods can increase food security and empower families and communities to be more healthy and self-sufficient; and

Whereas, successful models for intensive, sustainable food production in urban spaces exist in other large cities in cold-weather climates; and

Whereas, the growing local food movement has increased demand among Minneapolis residents for healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown foods and strengthened interest in developing partnerships between urban consumers and regional growers; and

Whereas, a local food system can support regional small farms and local jobs, create business opportunities and encourage the re-circulation of capital within a region; and
Whereas, buying local food helps fight climate change and improves air quality by reducing the transport, packaging and fossil fuel-derived inputs required to bring food from farm to table; and

Whereas, the City of Minneapolis has already taken important steps to support local foods, including:

- identifying community gardens as a valuable part of the urban landscape in the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth
- making compost and water available to community gardens
- planning vegetable gardens at 16 fire stations
- funding farm stands through Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis
- easing the licensing burden on new farm stands
- piloting a youth garden in collaboration with Emerge
- making climate change grants available to community groups working on local foods, for example the Kingfield Neighborhood community garden effort, the rooftop garden at the Hennepin County Medical Center, inclusion of local foods in Do It Green! activities, and the Gardening Matters landowner/gardener matchmaking website; and



Whereas, the Homegrown Minneapolis Initiative, begun in December, 2008, has engaged over one hundred stakeholders from multiple perspectives – farmers, community gardeners, farmers market managers, restaurateurs, food and farming nonprofits, academics, regulators and enthusiastic local-food consumers – in developing a set of specific recommendations for improving the production, distribution and consumption of fresh, local foods in Minneapolis;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by The City Council of The City of Minneapolis: That the City of Minneapolis finds that increasing the amount of healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown food being produced, distributed and consumed in Minneapolis is an important City goal.

Be It Further Resolved that the City of Minneapolis creates a Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force to implement the recommendations of the Homegrown Minneapolis report, as presented to the Health, Energy and Environment Committee on June 15, 2009. The Task Force is authorized to meet until July of 2011, is to be staffed by the Department of Health and Family Support, and will be made up of no more than 16 members, to include the following:

- The Vice Chair of the Health, Energy & Environment Committee as of 6/15/2009, acting as Co-Chair
- A representative appointed by the Mayor, acting as Co-Chair
- Representatives of the Minneapolis Departments of:
 - o Health and Family Support
 - o Regulatory Services
 - o Community Planning and Economic Development
 - o Public Works
 - o City Coordinator - Sustainability
- The community co-chairs of the Homegrown Minneapolis subcommittees on:
 - o Community and Backyard Gardens
 - o Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture
 - o Commercial Use of Local Foods
- A representative to be selected by the Minneapolis farmers markets managers
- A representative appointed by the Mayor
- Two representatives of the City Council
- Two at-large representatives to be chosen by the Task Force

The Minneapolis Attorney's Office and Departments of Communications, Intergovernmental Relations, and Neighborhood and Community Relations will assist the Task Force as needed. The Tri-Chairs of the Homegrown Minneapolis Initiative will continue to serve as strategic community leadership for this work, especially on the formation of a City advisory committee on food policy.

Be It Further Resolved that the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force is directed to return to the Health Energy and Environment Committee no later than the first quarter of 2010 with proposals for implementing recommendations from the Homegrown Minneapolis report, including but not limited to the:

- Formation of a City advisory committee on food policy
- Draft policy of a community garden program that allows organizations to lease non-developable city-owned property for community gardens
- Suggestions relating to the City's State legislative agenda
- Development of a Sustainability Indicator for sustainably and locally-grown foods
- Creation of a citywide topical plan on community gardens and urban agriculture
- Inventory of community kitchens and processing and distribution of sustainably and locally-grown food
- Improved coordination of farmers markets
- Equity of access and food security, including the use of EBT at farmers markets.

Adopted 6/26/2009.

Absent – Colvin Roy, Samuels.



APPENDIX 2

RESOLUTION 2011R-633

By Gordon

Amending Resolution 2011R-445 entitled “Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council and Recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods by amending Resolution 2009R-283 entitled “recognizing the Importance of Healthy, Sustainably Produced and Locally Grown Foods and Creating the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force”, passed June 26, 2009 by reorganizing the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force”, passed September 2, 2011.

Resolved by The City Council of The City of Minneapolis:

That the above-entitled Resolution be amended by revising the following Resolved Clauses to add two members to the Minneapolis Food Council (a representative from the Department of Regulatory Services and an additional City Council appointment):

Be It Further Resolved that the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council will be made up of no more than 19 21 members. The body will be structured to include participation of community members, City staff and elected representatives, a coownership model proven to be effective for moving food system work forward in Minneapolis. Term length will be two years beginning in January of even-numbered years; first term to begin in January of 2012 and end in December of 2013. Members may serve up to three consecutive terms.

Be It Further Resolved that of the 19 21 members, 14 15 members will be sought from the community, striving for diverse and balanced representation and being mindful to seek out community expertise and perspective from those often underrepresented (such as communities of color). Interested applicants will go through the City’s open appointments process, 7 each appointed by the Mayor and 8 appointed by the Council. The remaining 5 6 members will include one representative from each of the following City Departments: the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support, Community Planning and Economic Development, City Coordinator– Sustainability, the Department of Regulatory Services, a Mayor’s representative, and a Council member or Council member representative. The body will be staffed by the Homegrown Minneapolis Coordinator unless future funding for this position is not secured, in which case the Mayor’s Office will provide staffing.

Adopted 12/9/2011.



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